The Mountain Lake Sanctuary and Singing Tower

Near Lake Wales, Fla.

BOK MEMORIAL AND SINGING TOWER

The Singing Tower was designed and executed through the guiding genius of that great architect, Milton B. Medary. As Mr. Bok expressed himself, the Sanctuary alone did not satisfy him; something else was needed to complete his gift to the American people, and to bring him the satisfaction that he had made this world a bit more beautiful and better because he had lived in it; and so—The Singing Tower was born.

THE SINGING TOWER

The Entrance to the Singing Tower is a beautiful creation with its great door done in yellow brass, designed by Samuel Yellin. In front of the door is the burial place of Edward W. Bok, that great philanthropist who made this beautiful sanctuary and tower possible for American posterity. Its peacefulness displays all that Mr. Bok intended this beautiful sanctuary should represent—a place where the American people could get away from the busy world and find themselves.

ENTRANCE TO SINGING TOWER AND MOUND IN
FOREGROUND WHERE EDWARD W. BOK IS BURIED

The Singing Tower rises to a height of 205 feet, 2 inches. It has a square base 51 feet wide, changing in shape as it rises until it reaches the summit which is octagonal and but 37 feet wide. Its summit is crowned by panels of beautifully designed roses and palms, and its eight buttresses are pointed by symbolic herons, the four males carrying a fish in their beaks, and the four females feeding their young. The tower weighs 5500 tons and is anchored to a reinforced concrete mat. Southern materials have been used in its construction wherever possible; the gray Creole and the pink Etowah marble come from Georgia; the coquina rock was excavated at Daytona, and is similar to that used at the old Spanish fort at St. Augustine. Two copper steel tanks, with a capacity of 30,000 gallons, are located in the tower and used for watering the sanctuary.

THE SINGING TOWER

The Mountain Lake Sanctuary was designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, and occupies the highest point of land in Florida with its area of forty-eight acres, including Iron Mountain. Fourteen lakes may be seen from its highest point, and nearly thirty-six can be seen from the top of the Singing Tower. Tradition has it that many years ago Iron Mountain was sacred ground to the Florida Indians. Certainly a more suitable site could not have been selected to bring out the purpose for which Mr. Bok intended this everlasting gift of beauty to the American People.

AT THE MOUNTAIN LAKE SANCTUARY

The Sun Dial carved on the South Wall of the Singing Tower is a work of art in itself. It indicates the latitude and longitude of Iron Mountain. It stands vertically at right angle with the surface of the earth at latitude 27 degrees, 56 minutes, 10 seconds and is tilted towards the East with a declination of 4 degrees, 20 minutes. At its base is a table which gives the difference between sun and clock time for each day in this latitude. There are curved lines crossing the dial which give the dates of the month. The following inscription appears at the base of the dial:

This Singing Tower
With its adjacent Sanctuary
was dedicated
and presented for visitation
to the American People
by Calvin Coolidge
President of the United States
February the first
Nineteen hundred and twenty-nine

THE SUN DIAL ON THE SINGING TOWER

One of the beautiful features of the Singing Tower is the Great North Door. This great door is done in yellow brass, resembling a golden blaze, and portrays a most interesting study of the six days of creation as recorded in Genesis. It represents one of the finest artistic contributions to the Singing Tower, and blends harmoniously with the tower itself.

ENTRANCE TO THE SINGING TOWER

Edward W. Bok was grateful for what America had given him. He came to this country as a poor Dutch boy, made a great success, and wanted to show his appreciation to the American People. He spent several years in searching for a suitable location for a Sanctuary where people could get away from the busy world and have an opportunity to find themselves, and from this inspiration, become better citizens. After the Sanctuary had been in progress for some time, Mr. Bok felt that something else was necessary to bring him contentment and complete his realization, and so the beautiful Singing Tower was decided upon. Then came the bells and the Carillon. Mr. Bok had carried through life an inspiration which he received from his grandparents—to make this world a bit more beautiful and better because he had lived in it. He died January 9, 1930, and was laid to rest the following day in a crypt in front of the North Door of the Tower. His passing was a distinct loss to the people of America.

Edward W Bok

The inspiration of the Singing Tower was planned in harmony with the beauty of the surrounding Sanctuary, and this was accomplished by the majestic simplicity and beautiful singing qualities for which the Tower stands. This tower, although it originated from ancient times, is characterized as being truly American through the use of domestic materials, Florida tropical bird life and vegetation.

THE GATE AT THE BOK MEMORIAL THROUGH WHICH
WE SEE THE MOUND AT THE BASE OF THE TOWER
WHERE EDW. W. BOK IS BURIED

The interior of the Singing Tower is fitted up according to the nature of the Sanctuary. It is furnished in simple fashion, but artistically to conform with its purpose. All through Mr. Bok's life he cherished a tradition handed down from his grandparents, to make the world more beautiful and better. We find the following inscription over a beautiful fireplace in the Tower:

"Make you the world a bit better or more beautiful because you have lived in it."

INSIDE THE SINGING TOWER

Anton Brees, Bellmaster of the Sanctuary Bells, is acknowledged as the world's greatest carillonneur. He was born at Antwerp, Belgium, and was Laureate of the Royal Flemish Conservatory. His father before him was organist of the Cathedral for 47 years, and at the present time is carillonneur of Antwerp. Mr. Brees has opened all of the important carillons in America since 1924. The magnificent quality of his playing seems to cast a soul into the carillon, and he is considered by Mr. E. Denison Taylor, the founder of the Sanctuary Bells, as the only man who can bring the human element of sound out of these bells.

ANTON BREES PLAYING THE SANCTUARY BELLS
AT THE SINGING TOWER

That great sculptor, Lee O. Lawrie, has embodied the spirit of the Sanctuary in the Singing Tower. In the marble grilles of the East and West windows of the Tower Hall, he shows suggestions of a man sowing a garden, of a boy feeding cranes, of peacocks and flamingoes. Birds typical of America are used in the carvings, rather than Gothic gargoyles. Eagles with folded wings are carved on the upper balconies, and the panels show doves carrying laurel or oak as symbols of peace, good-will and strength.

CLOSE-UP OF SINGING TOWER, SHOWING
BEAUTIFUL DESIGNS IN THE MASONRY

Encircling the Tower above the North Door is a frieze depicting pelicans, herons and those characters famous in fables, such as the stork and fox, hare and tortoise, and the goose. The lancet windows designed by J. Dulles Allen embody the brilliance of Florida sunshine. The rise of nature is also depicted, showing the simple form of under sea life, such as the jelly fish, and gradually working into beautiful flowers and birds, with the figures of Adam and Eve expressing the dominion of man over all other forms of creation.

CLOSE-UP VIEW OF ONE OF THE DESIGNS
ON TOP OF TOWER

The entire ground floor of the Singing Tower is appointed as a study for Mr. Bok. It is of exceptional beauty with its high-vaulted hall lined with Etowah marble. Many features are contained here, including fine carvings and the carved mantle in this study is an outstanding feature in itself. Not elaborate but truly artistic and beautiful, it represents in a great measure the purpose of the sanctuary and tower.

A CORNER IN MR. BOK'S STUDY IN THE SINGING TOWER

Among the bells in the carillon, one of the most interesting is the Tenor Bell. The dedication of the carillon is inscribed on this bell as follows:

This Carillon
Is A Tribute of Affection
From Edward William Bok
To His Grandparents: Lovers of Beauty
Nineteen Hundred and Twenty-Six

THE GREAT BELL IN THE SINGING TOWER

Mr. Bok spared no expense to bring to this Sanctuary and Singing Tower birds and flowers that would make the surroundings more beautiful. Nightingales have been brought from England because their song brings cheerfulness and happiness to those fortunate enough to visit this Sanctuary. Flamingoes have also been imported in the hope that they would perhaps settle again in Florida. Years ago this beautiful bird was an inhabitant of Florida, but was driven out by the hunter and plumage seeker. Perhaps, however, they will thrive under the protection of the Sanctuary. The scarlet flamingoes come from Andros Island in Cuba, and the white flamingoes are from South America.

FLAMINGOES AT THE MOUNTAIN LAKE SANCTUARY

The visitor is impressed with the peacefulness that abounds in the Sanctuary as he wanders up the foot-path, with the song of the nightingales ringing above; he seems to find refuge as he breathes in the beauty around him. The perfumed air, the beautiful reflections of the Singing Tower in the moat surrounding it, the majestic peal of the carillon—all seem to lend enchantment and peacefulness not only to man, but even to the birds of the air and all animal life in this Sanctuary.

THE MOAT AROUND THE SINGING TOWER

The most important exotic plants in the Sanctuary are the Cattley guava, flame vine, duranta, Azalea Indica, white bauhinia, primrose jasmine, several kinds of acacia, Sabal havanensis, and cymbidium, a genus of interesting terrestrial orchids native to the mountains of tropical Asia. The wrought-iron crows at various points throughout the Sanctuary indicate its distance from principal points. It is 67 miles from the Atlantic Ocean, 74 miles from the Gulf of Mexico, 163 miles from Jacksonville, and 228 miles from Key West.

IN THE MOUNTAIN LAKE SANCTUARY

Practically all the planting in the Sanctuary has been done since 1923, with the exception of some pines which stood there originally. There are over 1000 oaks, 8000 azaleas, 100 Sabal palms, 300 magnolias, over 500 gordonias, and some 10,000 Sword and Boston ferns. Most of the plants come from the wilds of Florida, creating a most natural effect which was the object of the designer of this Sanctuary.

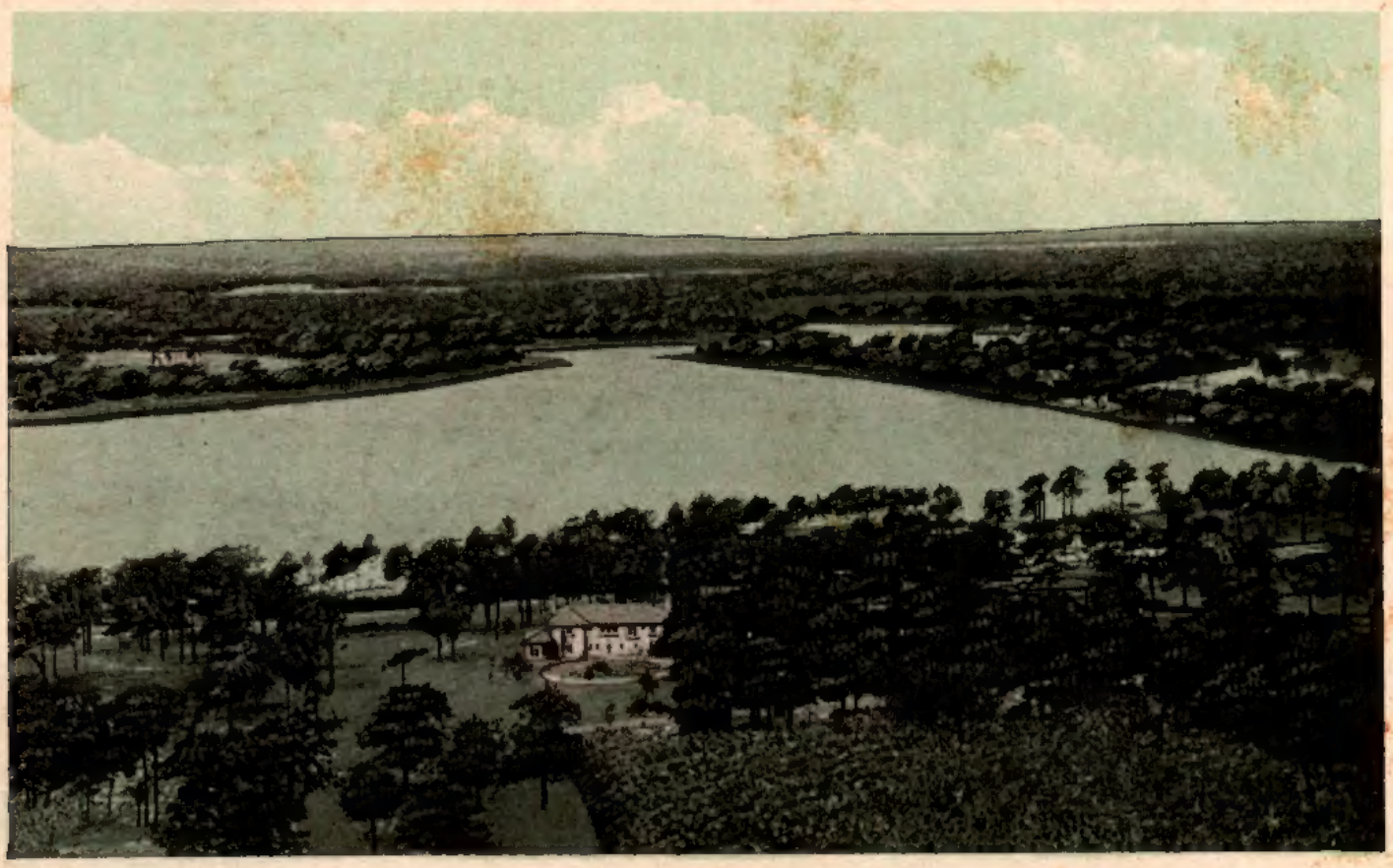
SOME OF THE BIG TREES IN THE MOUNTAIN LAKE SANCTUARY

The Sanctuary Bells have an aggregate weight of 123,264 pounds, and are cast in an alloy of selected copper and English block tin. The Carillon Bells in contrast to Chimes are stationary, and do not swing when played. The clappers hang from the inside of the bells, and are operated by a system of levers connected with the clavier which is played by the carillonneur in a room below the bell tower. The carillon is heard to best advantage about 200 yards from the Tower, especially on the southern and western slopes of the Sanctuary. From these points, the music sings out from the upper part of the tower as if the entire edifice were bursting into song. The name "Singing Tower" was thereby originated.

THE WEST WINDOW OF THE SINGING TOWER

The Carillon Bells make up the finest and largest carillon ever cast, and consists of 71 bells, cast and installed by John Taylor & Company of Loughborough, England. The carillon is located nearly at the top of the tower and the bells hang in rows on five levels, the heaviest being at the bottom, and the lightest at the top. The weight of these bells ranges from the largest which is 24,000 lbs. to the smallest which is 12 lbs.

THE CARILLON BELLS IN THE SINGING TOWER



MOUNTAIN LAKE FROM THE BOK MEMORIAL TOWER

WHEN THE BELLS WILL PLAY

THE FIRST CONCERT opening the 1930-1931 season of The Sanctuary Bells at Mountain Lake, Florida, will be given

Tuesday, December 16, 1930

at 3 o'clock in the afternoon

There will be recitals four times each week on

TUESDAY THURSDAY
SATURDAY and SUNDAY

at 3 o'clock in the afternoon

The last recital of the season will be given on Tuesday, April 14, 1931. The recitals will be three-quarters of an hour duration. The nearest town to Mountain Lake is Lake Wales and from there direct to the Sanctuary is a boulevard leading to the public parking area, and open to the public from 8 A. M. to 5 P. M.

Special recitals will be given on each of the following dates:

Christmas Eve, December 24, 1930, at 12 o'clock midnight.
New Year's Eve, December 31, 1930, at 12 o'clock midnight.
Easter Morning Sunrise Service, April 5.

With the following at 12 o'clock noon:

January 9, Memorial Recital
January 19, General Robert E. Lee's Birthday
January 25
February 12, Lincoln's Birthday
February 22, Washington's Birthday
February 25
March 22
April 14

"Wherever your lives may be cast,
make you the world a bit more beautiful
and better because you have lived in it."

Edward W Bok

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